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ABSTRACT

This statement attempts to establish standards for the selection, preparation, and assignment of elementary and secondary social studies teachers. It indicates the responsibilities of the teacher in guiding the teacher-learning process, and in the relationships which the teacher has with students, the community, and the profession. It sets forth the facilities needed to aid effective instruction, the conditions necessary for teaching and learning, and the provisions that a school should make for the competency and continuous professional growth of its social studies staff. (Author/RT)

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Standards for Social Studies Teachers

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NCSS Advisory Committee on Teacher Education and Certification

and

NCSS *Ad Hoc* Committee on Teacher Standards

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Foreword

For at least a decade or more the National Council for the Social Studies has struggled with the problem of publishing a comprehensive statement dealing with standards for social studies teachers. Several committees have prepared such statements and from time to time the reports of those committees have appeared in SOCIAL EDUCATION. Although these were sound statements, they did not seem to meet the needs of teachers and others in the field who were faced with day-to-day decision-making concerning teacher preparation and teacher assignment. In 1969, therefore, the Board of Directors appointed a special *ad hoc* committee consisting entirely of teachers, chaired by Helen M. Garrett, and charged it with the responsibility of drafting a comprehensive statement on teacher standards. It was out of the work of this committee, along with contributions from the Advisory Committees on Teacher Education, chaired by Richard F. W. Whittemore (1969), and by Theodore Kaltsounis (1970), that the present document evolved. Harris L. Dante, Jean Tilford, and John D. McAulay edited and prepared the final draft for the Board of Directors.

The preparation of a comprehensive statement on teacher standards is a particularly difficult assignment. Because there is little solid and convincing research to guide thinking, opinions vary greatly as to how social studies teachers should be prepared and what constitutes a proper job assignment for a social studies teacher. The matter is further compounded because the statement has to speak not only to standards for secondary teachers covering a broad range of teaching specialties, but also to standards for elementary teachers, including those in self-contained classrooms, as well as those in other organizational arrangements. Because there is not general consensus on many matters surrounding teacher preparation and assignment, any statement issued by the National Council would arouse some controversy. This is as it should be, because controversy should lead to public discussion of this important professional problem. The alternative is to issue no statement at all, with the expectation that the problem will somehow ultimately resolve itself or simply go away.

Whatever disagreements there may be within the profession on certain specific items in the standards statement, these should not be construed to mean that the entire document lacks validity. It should be stressed that the present document represents the official position of the National

Council for the Social Studies on teacher standards. As such it should be used by teachers, supervisors, boards of education, and other school officials in making decisions concerning teacher preparation and teacher assignment. The National Council is urging the membership to promote the widest possible distribution of this document and to use it as the basis for negotiating issues relating to teacher preparation and teacher assignment.

In preparing this document, the National Council has relied on the professional judgment of many of its members representing a full range of professional roles — elementary and secondary school teachers, supervisors, department chairmen, professors from teacher education, professors from history and the social sciences, and others. The Steering Committee of the House of Delegates reviewed the statement at its meeting in St. Louis in March, 1971 and enthusiastically endorsed and approved it.

We believe that the statement represents the best current thinking on this matter at this time. Nonetheless, standards are subject to change, and therefore should be under constant study. In order to insure continued careful attention to teacher standards, the President of the National Council is immediately appointing a three-member Review Committee that will be charged with the responsibility of studying developments in teacher standards and for making recommendations for revision of this document three years hence. It is hoped and expected that the present statement will be used, discussed, criticized, and thoroughly critiqued at the local, state, and national levels. Feedback from these deliberations can be used by the Review Committee to prepare a revised set of standards for the latter half of the 1970's.

The National Council for the Social Studies wishes to express sincere thanks to the many individuals who contributed to the preparation of this and earlier statements on teacher standards: *ad hoc* Committee on Teacher Load and Assignment (1964), John Yee, *Chairman,* Harris L. Dante, John Jarolimek; Committee on Teacher Education and Certification (1966), Harris L. Dante, *Chairman,* Jack Sutherland, *Associate Chairman,* William W. Crowder, Frances Ferrell, Harriette Kuhlman, Howard Lawrence, Raymond H. Muessig, Helen Storen, Kenneth B. Thurston, Richard F. W. Whittemore; *ad hoc* Committee on Teacher Standards (1969), Helen M. Garrett, *Chairman,* Donald Anctil, Richard Cole, John R. Drain, William R. Pirone, Ethel Thorn, June Tyler; Advisory Committees on Teacher Education and Certification, Richard F. W. Whittemore, *Chairman* (1969), and Theodore Kaltsounis, *Chairman* (1970); and the final editing committee for the Board of Directors, Harris L. Dante, John D. McAulay, and Jean Tilford.

John Jarolimek, *President*
National Council for the Social Studies

Standards for Social Studies Teachers

I. Introduction

The social studies teacher faces a complex task in a field that is becoming pedagogically unmanageable, and yet has become increasingly important in the preparation of future citizens who must address themselves to the challenge and responsibilities of modern society.

The teacher must secure some mastery of the various social science disciplines;[1] including an understanding of their interdisciplinary relationships, in order to know what issues are worthy objects of study. Knowledge and sophistication in regard to contemporary affairs and the ability to develop inquiry skills in regard to social values and decision making related to crucial social issues are also necessary.

The selection of these goals emerges from a mass of content in which there is no established pattern of continuity or sequence. Moreover, in meeting the needs and interests of students it is necessary to help them gain meaning and understanding from concepts which are often more abstract than concrete. It is to this difficult and insightful task that the social studies teacher is dedicated.

The following Statement on Standards for Social Studies Teachers has the classroom teacher as its primary focus. The teaching-learning act should be the center and the most important element in the entire educational enterprise. The teacher is the key figure in creating and sustaining the intellectual and emotional climate needed in the classroom to achieve the goals of effective learning.

The Statement deals with the teacher's qualifications, responsibilities, and the conditions necessary for successful teaching and learning. It is intended to assist teachers, administrators, and all those engaged in the pre-service and in-service education of teachers to improve existing programs or for the development of new ones. The goal is to give the teacher the psychological and professional support and the personal remuneration needed to reach the level of competence, effectiveness, and respect to be recognized as a true professional.

II. Professional Preparation

There should be diversity and an open-endedness in teacher education and certifi-

[1] The terms "social sciences" and "social studies" as used throughout this Statement will be assumed to include history.

cation programs which would leave responsible institutions free to develop experimental programs in response to the rapidly changing requirements of society, scholarship, and students.

However, each elementary and secondary social studies teacher should have a well-planned undergraduate program, including preparation in the areas of liberal general studies, an in-depth knowledge in areas of academic specialization, and professional education. The NCSS "Guidelines for the Preparation of Social Studies Teachers, 1966" suggests the following distribution of course work indicating a proposed minimum and a range extending to a possible maximum given as a percentage of total credit hours: general education 25-30 percent; academic teaching fields 50-60 percent (including professionalized subject matter for elementary teachers); professional education 15-25 percent.[2]

A. *General Studies*

All teachers need a liberal education as a basis for the intellectual independence that, in every great age, has animated the quest for understanding of those enduring principles and values that have helped to make man less of a brute and more of a civilized human being. There can be no uniform prescription for a liberal education but a beginning can be made with a rigorous introduction to the humanities and the social sciences, the physical sciences, the biological sciences. The prospective social studies teacher should immerse himself in a culture different from his own and should especially become sensitive to the contrasting styles and world views of the Western world and the non-Western world. The teacher should, of course, develop competent communication skills and should become knowledgeable in at least one discipline outside the social sciences.

B. *Academic Specialization*

Elementary Teachers. All elementary teachers should have a minimum of 18 semester hours in the social sciences. Interdisciplinary courses involving content from the social sciences should be included in the prospective teacher's program.

Prospective elementary teachers should also have some advanced study in one or more of the social sciences or history relevant to the curricular areas in which they plan to teach. This should require intensive studies in the literature of the field and the ability to do independent research.

Secondary Teachers. Beyond the basic introduction to all of the social sciences, the prospective secondary social studies teacher should have a close acquaintance with three social sciences including specialization with research experience in one. The insistent demands for urban studies, ethnic studies, area studies, and studies in social conflict require their inclusion in the program of preparation for social studies teachers.

Both elementary and secondary social studies teachers should have at least an introduction to the subject matters and modes of inquiry of one or more discipline from each of the three general categories of social science: the synoptic (history and geography); the systematic (economics and political science); and the holistic (anthropology, sociology, and social psychology).

C. *Professional Education*

Studies in the professional sequence should introduce the prospective teacher to the theory and practice of modern social studies education.

[2] "Guidelines for the Preparation of Social Studies Teachers" may be found in the October, 1967 issue of SOCIAL EDUCATION.

Course work should include emphases on educational psychology and learning theory, teaching strategies, the use of various instructional media and other resources, testing and evaluation, and student teaching and/or internship. The prospective teacher should also develop competencies in creating a democratic classroom atmosphere, in communication skills, and in skills in interpersonal relationships.

A laboratory course in teaching methods should form the bridge between theory and practice. The prospective teacher should enter the classroom almost at once.

Professional coursework should involve field experience as well as work experience, including participation in community service organizations, in recreational activities or tutoring, or in similar employment.

Broad knowledge through coursework or experience which makes the individual sensitive to the problems of living in a pluralistic society, aware of the manifestations of racism in education, and informed as to approaches for minimizing or eliminating these conditions should be included.

The second major phase of professional preparation should consist of a year or more of paid teaching experience, comparable to a medical residency. The new teacher should have regular teaching responsibilities under the tutelage of experienced social studies teachers, the department chairman, and, if possible, a social studies supervisor.

III. The Professional Education Staff

State Departments of Education should not approve any institution for teacher education unless it can adequately staff the necessary courses and programs for both academic and professional instruction. College supervisors of social studies teachers and public school and State Departments of Education supervisory personnel should be subject matter specialists rather than generalists. They should also be experts in the teaching of the social studies. A full-time load of the college supervisor would normally be no more than 15 student teachers. The cooperating teacher should be a master teacher and a subject matter specialist who also meets the standards set forth in this statement. Generally, a master's degree and at least three years of successful teaching experience would be expected of the cooperating teacher, who should also be voluntarily willing to accept the professional responsibility of guiding the student teacher.

IV. Screening Candidates for Social Studies Teaching

The college student who is preparing to be a social studies teacher should be expected to meet various quality standards. The goals of this program should be clearly adequate general intelligence, strong record in any sequences which will be used in later teaching fields, desirable personality characteristics, absence of defects fatal to good teaching, and strong professional competencies.

Generally, the student would be admitted to the Social Studies teaching program at the beginning of the junior year. At this point the candidate should have above-average academic achievement and meet acceptable levels of competency in reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills. He should be free of any speech and hearing deficiencies.

The second screening would occur at the time of admission to student teaching. At this point the student should maintain all previous standards and should have at least a 2.00 cumulative grade average with 2.25 in his teaching fields and in the professional sequence.

The third screening would come at the conclusion of student teaching and if successful the candidate would be recommended for graduation and certification. The student teaching experience should repre-

sent a gradual induction into classroom responsibility and ultimately the assumption of a full day's teaching load. The student teacher should be assigned to a qualified cooperating teacher in the area of social studies for which he is prepared. Evaluation would involve the University supervisor, the cooperating teacher, and the student teacher. Before graduation the student would be expected to meet all standards with careful staff scrutiny of the student's physical, psychological, and other personal-professional characteristics.

V. Certification

State Departments of Education should reduce certification procedures to two simple steps: first, one-year probationary certification for the prospective teacher awarded on recommendation of an accredited educational institution; second, regular certification awarded after at least one year of appropriate teaching experience and on recommendation of a local or regional committee of social studies teachers and supervisors representing the profession. The State Departments of Education might have to retain supervisory jurisdiction over these procedures; the initiative must, however, lie with appropriate professional organizations.

VI. Recruitment and Assignment of Teachers

A. *Employment of the Teacher*

No teacher should be employed or permitted to teach social studies at the secondary level or departmentalized elementary level unless he has completed a social science degree program leading to certification. Elementary teachers with multifield responsibilities should have an interdisciplinary social science background.

The person employed to teach social studies should be primarily interested in and dedicated to the teaching of the social studies. This dedication can be determined by ascertaining the individual's ultimate professional goals. No one teaching any social studies class should be employed just to accommodate the special needs of other departments or facets of the school programs.

B. *Teacher Assignment*

The teacher should be prepared for the level assigned. The level of the teacher's assignment should be changed only after appropriate preparation.

The teacher should teach only in the area or areas for which the teacher was prepared. The teacher's assignments should reflect the field of the teacher's greatest competency.

Teachers should be encouraged to develop and teach new courses in their own particular areas of interest and preparation rather than to be expected to teach existing courses outside their areas of interest and preparation.

Teachers should not accept responsibilities (administrative, curricular, co-curricular, or extracurricular) that interfere with their effectiveness as social studies teachers.

VII. Guiding and Directing the Learning Process

The social studies teacher as a facilitator of learning exhibits behavior harmonious with the nature of the learning process, the nature of social studies as revealed in recent trends, and contemporary social realities.

A. *Relationships with Students*

The teacher equally values each and every student as worthy human beings regardless of race, sex, religion, ethnic origin, socioeconomic level, or level of achievement.

Teachers should make every effort to understand each of their students and their strengths, weaknesses, and problems.

Teachers should heed the solicited and unsolicited views and comments of their stu-

dents and their relationships with them, and consider such views in their self-improvement efforts.

The teacher analyzes student behavior—especially hostile behavior—on the basis of its causes.

The teacher recognizes that children are capable of learning by themselves as well as from each other and acts as a director of learning experiences, rather than as an authoritarian source of knowledge.

B. *The Teacher as Planner*

The teacher develops significantly relevant objectives cooperatively with the students. Initiatory activities are planned which will help the students become aware of the basic problem, clarify the issues, and motivate them toward achievement of the objectives.

In order to plan meaningful learning experiences the teacher is aware of the basic contemporary social issues at the local, regional, national, and international levels.

The teacher understands the subject matter involved in terms of its basic concepts, generalizations, and unresolved questions.

The teacher knows the background of his students and utilizes knowledge of their previous experiences to make the teaching-learning relevant to them and to their social environment.

The teacher knows the investigative methods of the social sciences and utilizes them as guides in planning investigation-oriented learning experiences at the student's levels.

The teacher is cognizant of individual differences and plans a variety of learning activities in order to reach all students.

C. *The Teacher in the Classroom*

The teacher maintains an open and questioning atmosphere in the classroom in which students are free to develop a questioning attitude and are guided to learn in a variety of ways. Teaching strategies and materials would be varied rather than following a routine pattern.

The teacher is skillful in the use of various questioning techniques and is capable of leading the students in discussion involving higher levels of thinking, including analyzing, synthesizing, hypothesizing, testing of hypotheses, inferring, and evaluating.

The teacher utilizes the local environment, the experiences of the class, and a variety of other resources in motivating and directing the students in understanding various social situations and phenomena.

The teacher recognizes that academic freedom and responsibility to demonstrate a high commitment to the students' right to deal with controversial issues, including the establishment of criteria for choosing between alternative values in an intellectually honest way, are both necessary and important.

The teacher maintains an atmosphere of intellectual integrity by allowing and encouraging the consideration of all possible points of view in treating various topics and issues.

The teacher should not impose his views on the students but by teaching and allowing them to be critical of all sources of information he may state his own conclusions when appropriate.

The teacher considers the process of rational decision making to be the basic method of learning for the social studies and encourages students to apply it to contemporary issues.

The teacher views pupil progress and achievement in terms of understandings (concepts and generalizations), intellectual skills, and affective behavior. Evaluation is regarded as a continuous process and the teacher devises a variety of instruments making use of formal and informal techniques, including self-evaluation, in order to assess student growth.

VIII. The Teacher in the School Community

The teacher understands the community in which the students live and makes every effort to see that the school serves the interests of the community and the larger society.

The teacher heeds the solicited and unsolicited views and comments of those in the school community relative to teaching and the teacher's relations with them. These judgments are considered in the teacher's self-improvement efforts.

The teacher should exercise his political rights and participate in the political process as a voter, party worker, or candidate as he wishes.

IX. Basic Conditions for Teaching and Learning

Teachers, however competent they may be, cannot function to the best of their capabilities unless certain basic conditions of employment are secured. It is imperative that the proper educational climate be created and maintained for the teaching-learning experience to be effective.

A. *Academic Freedom*

The school administration should recognize the right and responsibility of social studies teachers to deal with controversial issues in a way which presents all possible points of view.

The school administration should publish guidelines and a clear policy statement regarding the right and responsibility of social studies teachers to deal with controversy.

Teachers and students should be able to utilize published materials, journals and other media, and resource persons that they deem necessary. The school library should subscribe to critical unpopular journals appropriate for given grade levels, and students should have the opportunity to get acquainted with them.

The school administration should make every effort to enlighten the public and various governmental agencies and bodies about the importance of this policy and resist any pressure to suppress academic freedom.

When a teacher's academic freedom is jeopardized, the administration should ask the teacher's organizations to help investigate and should consider their judgment in shaping further action to protect academic freedom rather than the narrow interests of pressure groups.

The teacher should teach in a school situation which encourages students to learn in the community and society at large, outside as well as inside the school building.

B. *The Teacher's Class Load and Class Size*

The secondary social studies teacher should teach no more than five periods per day in a school which is organized in the traditional 40-50 minute periods. Four periods per day, or their equivalent in a reorganized and more flexible school day schedule, would be an even more desirable goal.

The teacher should be given one period for preparation and one duty-free lunch period per day regardless of his teaching level. In schools in which team teaching is used, all teachers in a particular team must be given the same period for preparation.

The teacher's program should consist of no more than two basic preparations. The assignment of a course requiring an additional preparation is possible only on a voluntary basis.

The teacher should be responsible for no more than 25 students in schools that are traditionally graded and organized in self-contained classrooms.

The teacher should be responsible for no more than 125 students per day exclusive of homeroom assignments in schools in which

teachers have different groups and classes of students.

C. *The Teacher's Related Duties*

The teacher should be assigned no more than one extracurricular activity at a time during the school year.

The teacher should be relieved of many related routine duties by para-professionals and/or student assistants.

The teacher should be given assistance in the preparation of audiovisual aids and in the procurement and maintenance of audio-visual equipment.

D. *The Teacher's Instructional Environment*

Teachers should be provided with a specially equipped social studies laboratory for their classes.

A variety of instructional resources and audiovisual equipment should be readily accessible.

A social studies staff workroom equipped with desks, typewriters, duplicating equipment, and a professional library should be provided.

A staffed resource center in which students can engage in independent study should be available.

Social studies teachers should be consulted in the design of new school buildings to insure facilities necessary for an effective social studies program.

X. The Teacher as a Professional Person

As a professional person, the social studies teacher has an obligation to fulfill responsibilities which result in strengthening his profession. He should exhibit a commitment toward self-improvement both in professional and civic matters. He should belong to organized professional groups and actively work for the improvement of the teaching and learning of social studies.

A. *The Teacher's Self-Improvement*

The teacher should continue his formal education through coursework in the areas of his concern and by keeping abreast of current related literature.

A fifth year of study, ordinarily completed within the first five years of teaching, is essential. Graduate programs should be planned that relate to the subject areas being taught, and appropriate work in professional education or other cognate areas should be designed to improve instruction, such as reading, instructional materials, and modern educational technology.

The teacher should voluntarily participate in special in-service programs and should attend or organize professional meetings that assess and seek improvement of the teaching and learning of the social studies and the school program as a whole.

The teacher utilizes every opportunity to improve himself professionally, through participation in volunteer organizations and through temporary service or employment in industries and agencies that meet social needs.

The teacher has the right to expect support and encouragement from his district and school administration in his professional growth efforts. This should be in ways such as funded in-service programs, well-supplied professional libraries, paid leaves and travel expenses for professional meetings and workshops, reimbursement for educational costs, and sabbatical leaves for long-term professional growth activities.

The teacher must continuously examine his views and beliefs and his social behavior in order to reflect and act on the need to eliminate possible inconsistencies.

The teacher has a responsibility to refuse assignments and employment both in and out of school that are detrimental to his teaching performance and to his self-improvement.

The teacher has a responsibility to act in ways which demonstrate his commitment to the elimination of discriminatory practices.

B. *The Teacher and the Organized Profession*

Both the elementary and secondary teachers of social studies must join and participate in the activities of the local, state, and national councils for the social studies as well as in other appropriate professional organizations and learned societies.

As a member of local and regional social studies teachers organizations, the teacher must encourage them to act in the following ways:

Bring about the necessary basic conditions for teaching and learning social studies.

Assess and revise existing local social studies curricula and programs.

Initiate, execute, and evaluate social studies experimental programs at the local level.

Discuss and evaluate research findings and new developments in social studies education.

Evaluate and recommend commercially produced instructional social studies materials.

Recommend and supervise the production of materials at the local level to supplement or replace inadequate commercially produced instructional materials.

Educate the public in new social studies programs.

The teacher should belong to and participate in the National Council for the Social Studies and support its actions which include:

Inspiration and support to the local organizations as they seek to carry out their professional responsibilities.

Evaluation of new developments in the social studies and assistance in the dissemination of these developments.

Stimulation of research in social studies education and the dissemination of research findings.

Encouragement of publishers and manufacturers of instructional aids to produce materials that deal critically with social issues and that are consistent with new developments in the social studies.

Secondary social studies teachers or elementary school teachers having a social science major should also belong to a learned society in the discipline of their specialization.

Teachers should have the right to engage in responsible social actions to gain and safeguard the basic civil and professional rights of teachers and students.

XI. Conclusion

This Statement has attempted to establish standards for the selection, preparation, and assignment of social studies teachers. It has indicated the responsibilities of the teacher in guiding the teaching-learning process, and in the relationships which the teacher has with students, the community, and the profession. It sets forth the facilities needed to aid effective instruction, the conditions necessary for teaching and learning, and the provisions that a school should make for the competency and continuous professional growth of its social studies staff.

The National Council for the Social Studies will keep this Statement under continuous review and revision as knowledge grows and as more comprehensive and sophisticated theory and practice related to social studies teaching emerge in the future.